DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 144 681 PS 009 489

AUTHOR Katz, Lilian G.
TITLE Ethical Issues in Working with Young Children.
INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, Urbana, Ill.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Oct 77
NOTE 49p.
AVAILABLE FROM ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, University of Illincis, 805 West Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, Illinois 61801 (Catalog #169, $1.50)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Care Workers; *Day Care Services; *Early Childhood Education; Ethical Values; *Ethics; Parent School Relationship; Preschool Education; *Preschool Teachers; Student Teacher Relationship; Teacher Role

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses several types of ethical problems encountered by day care and preschool workers, and suggests guidelines for developing a code of ethics for early childhood practitioners. Topics dicussed include the meaning of a code of ethics; the need for such a code for early childhood practitioners; examples of ethical problems involving parents, children, colleagues and employing agencies; and steps that may be taken towards developing a code of ethics. (Author/SB)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED144681

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ETHICAL ISSUES IN WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

by
Lilian G. Katz, Ph.D.
Professor of Early Childhood Education
University of Illinois

Director, ERIC Clearinghouse
on Early Childhood Education

PS 009489

Available from:
ERIC Clearinghouse on
Early Childhood Education
University of Illinois
805 West Pennsylvania Avenue
Urbana, Illinois 61801

Price: $1.50 Catalog #169

October 1977

ETHICAL ISSUES IN WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

What should a teacher do when

- .a parent demands that she use a method of discipline that goes against her own preferences?
- .when the owner of her day care center appears to be giving false information to the licensing authorities?
- .when a parent complains to her about the behavior of a colleague?
- .when a child tells her about law breaking behavior observed at home?
- .when a mother pours out all her personal troubles?

The list of questions of this kind is potentially very long. But answers to such questions cannot be drawn from research reports, from the accumulated knowledge of child development, or even from educational philosophy. The issues raised and their answers lie in the realm of professional ethics.

One of the characteristic features of a profession is that its practitioners share a code of ethics, usually developed, promoted and monitored by a professional society or association. Agreement as to whether a given occupation is really a bona fide profession, or when it becomes so, is difficult to obtain (Becker, 1962). In this paper the term "profession" is used in its general sense to refer to an occupation that is client-service centered as distinguished from those occupations that are profit or product centered or bureaucratically organized. While day care and preschool workers are not yet professionalized, their work frequently gives rise to the kinds or problems addressed by codes of ethics.

The purpose of this paper is to encourage discussion of the complex ethical problems encountered by day care and preschool workers.

I shall attempt to suggest some of the central issues by addressing the questions:

What do we mean by a code of ethics?

Why is a code of ethics important?

What are some examples of ethical conflicts in day care and preschool work?

What steps might be taken to help day care and preschool workers resolve these conlicts?

What Do We Mean By a Code of Ethics?

Of all the dictionary definitions of "ethics" available, the one most relevant here is "the system or code of morals of a particular philosopher, religion, group, profession, etc." (Webster's 2nd Edition, Unabridged). More specifically, Moore defines "ethics" as "...private systems of law which are characteristic of all formally constituted organizations" (1970, p. 116). He notes also that these codes "...highlight proper relations with clients or others outside the

organizations, rather than procedural rules for organizational behavior" (p. 116). Similarly, Bersoff says that ethics "...refer(s) to the way a group of associates define(s) their special responsibility to one another and the rest of the social order in which they work" (1975, p. 359).

Maurice Levine (1972), in his examination of the complex ethical problems which arise in the practice of psychiatry, proposes that codes of ethics can be understood as one of the methods by which groups of workers cope with their temptations. He suggests also that ethics have the function of minimizing the distorting effects of wishful thinking, of limiting or inhibiting one's destructive impulses. In addition, Levine asserts that codes of ethics embody those principles or forces which stand in opposition to self-aggrandizement--especially

when self-aggrandizement might be at the expense of others. Similarly, according to Levine, ethics provide guidelines for action in cases of potentially significant damage to others, or potential harm to another's interests. In much the same spirit, Eisenberg (1975) proposes a "general law that the more powerful a change agent, or a given treatment, the riskier its application." As the risk to either the client or the practitioner increases, the necessity for ethical guidelines seems to increase.

From time to time, I have asked students in early childhood education to try to develop codes of ethics for themselves. Invariably they produce sets of statements that are more appropriately defined as "goals" rather than ethics, although the distinctions between the two are not always easily made. The statement, "I shall impart knowledge and skills" seems

to belong to the category of goals. The statement, "I shall respect the child's ethnic background" more easily seems to belong to the category of ethics. The major distinction between the two categories seems to be that goals are broad statements about the effects one intends to have. Ethics, on the other hand, seem to be statements about how to conduct oneself in the course of implementing goals.

In summary, a code of ethics may be defined as a set of statements that helps us to deal with the temptations inherent in our occupations. A code of ethics may also help us to act in terms of that which we believe to be right rather than what is expedient--especially when doing what we believe is right carries risks. Situations in which doing what is right carries high probability of getting an award or being

rewarded may not require a code of ethics as much a situations rife with risks (e.g., risking the loss of a job or a license to practice, facing professional blacklisting or even harsher consequences). Codes of ethics are statements about right or good ways to conduct ourselves in the course of implementing our goals. They are statements that encourage us (i.e. give us the courage) to act in accordance with our professional judgment of what is best for the clients being served even when they may not agree. Codes of ethics give us courage to act in terms of what we believe to be in the best interests of the client rather than in terms of what will make our clients like us. Needless to say, the ethical principles implied in the code reflect the group's position on what is valuable and worthwhile in society in general.

For the purposes of this paper, the main features of codes of ethics considered are the group's beliefs about: (1) what is right rather than expedient, (2) what is good rather than simply practical, (3) what acts members must never engage in or condone even if those acts would work or if members could get away with such acts, and a group's beliefs regarding acts to which they must never be accomplices, bystanders or contributors.

Why Is a Code of Ethics Important?

The specific aspects of working with preschool children that give rise to ethical problems addressed here are the (1) power and status of practitioners, (2) multiplicity of clients, (3) ambiguity of the data base, and (4) role ambiguity. Each aspect is discussed below.

Power and Status of Practitioners

It is taken as a general principle that in any profession, the more powerless the client vis-a-vis the practitioner, the more important the practitioner's ethics become. That is to say, the greater the power of the practitioner over the client, the greater the necessity for internalized restraints against abusing that power.

Preschool practitioners have great power over young children, especially in day care centers. Practitioners' superior physical power over young children is obvious. In addition, practitioners have virtually total power over the psychological good and resources of value to the young in their care. The young child's power to modify a teacher's behavior is largely dependent on the extent to which a teacher yields that power to him. Whatever power

children might have over their caregivers' behavior is unlikely to be under conscious control. Obviously young children cannot effectively organize strikes or boycotts or report malpractice to the authorities. Children may report to a parent what they perceive to be abusive caregiver behavior, but the validity of such reports is often questionable. Furthermore, parental reactions to these reports may be unreliable. In one case, a five-year-old reported to his mother that he had been given only one slice of bread during the day at the center as punishment for misbehavior. His mother was reported to have responded by saying "then tomrrow, behave yourself."

It is neither possible nor desirable to monitor teachers constantly in order to ensure that such abuses do not occur. Since there are often no "other experts watching,"

as Moore (1970) puts it, and the child's self-protective repertoire is limited, a code of ethics, internalized as commitments to right conduct, might help to strengthen resistance to occupational temptations and help practitioners to make ethical choices.

Another aspect of the work of preschool and day care practitioners which affects ethical behavior is the relatively low status of practitioners in the early childhood field. Parents seem far more likely to make demands on practitioners for given kinds of practices in preschool and day care centers than they are to demand specific medical procedures from pediatricians, for example.

A case in point is an incident concerning a young mother who brought her four-year-old son to the day care center every morning at 7:30 and picked him up again every evening

around 5:30 p.m. She gave the staff strict instructions that under no circumstances was the child to nap during the day. She explained that when she took her son home in the evenings she was tired from her long day and needed to be able to feed him and have him tucked away for the night as soon as possible. It is not difficult to picture the difficulties encountered by the staff of this proprietary day care center. By the middle of the afternoon this child was unmanageable. The state regulations under which the center was licensed specified a daily rest period for all children. Sensitivity and responsiveness to parental preferences, however, were also main tenets of the center's philosophy. Although the staff attempted to talk to the mother about the child's fatigue and intractability, the mother had little

regard for the staff's expertise and judgment and total disregard for state licensing standards.

In the situation described above, the staff was frustrated and angered by the mother and the child, and felt victimized by both. Could they put the child down for a nap and get away with it? A real temptation! Would that work? Would it be right? It might have been right to ask the mother to place her child in a different center. But such a suggestion has risks: a proprietary day care center is financially dependent on maintaining as full enrollment as possible. Also, in some communities, alternative placements are simply not available.

Accumulated experience suggests that four-year-olds thrive best with adequate rest periods during the day, and a state

regulation requiring such a program provision is unlikely to be controversial. The problem outlined above could have been solved by invoking the state's regulations. But state regulations are not uniformly observed! Why should this particular one be honored, and others overlooked?

Working daily with young and relatively powerless clients is likely to carry with it many temptations to abuse that power. Practitioners may have been tempted at one time or another to regiment the children, to treat them all alike, to intimidate them into conformity to adult demands, to reject unattractive children, or to become deeply attached to some children. Thus the hortatory literature addressed to pre-school practitioners reminds them to respect individual differences, to accept children, to use positive guidance and to treat

children with dignity. It seems reasonable to suggest that most such exhortations should be part of a code of ethics.

Multiplicity of Clients

A code of ethics may help practitioners to resolve issues arising from the fact that they serve a variety of client groups. Most preschool workers, when asked "Who is your client?" usually respond without hesitation, "The child." But it is probably more realistic to order the client groups into a hierarchy so that parents are the primary group (see Bersoff, 1975), children secondary, the employing agency and the larger community next (see also Beker, 1976). Each group of clients in the hierarchy may be perceived as exerting pressures for practitioners to act in ways that may be against the best interests of another client group. As a case in point, preschool workers often

lament the fact that many parents want their preschoolers to learn to read, while they themselves consider such instruction premature and therefore potentially harmful to the children. At times, the best interests of both parents and children may be in conflict with agency interests and expectations, and so forth. A code of ethics should help to clarify the position of each client group in the hierarchy, and provide guidelines on how to resolve questions concerning which of the groups has the best claim to practitioners' consideration.

Ambiguity of the Data Base

Many differences of opinion on courses of action cannot be resolved by reference to either state/local regulations or a reliable body of evidence. It is taken as a general proposition that weakness in the data base of a professional field often

causes a vacuum which is likely to be filled by ideologies. The field of day care and preschool education is one which seems to qualify as ideology-bound (see Katz, 1975), giving rise to a variety of temptations for practitioners. The uncertainity and/or unavailabilty of reliable empirical findings about the long-term developmental consequences of early experiences tempts practitioners (as well as their leaders) to develop orthodoxies, as well as to become doctrinaire in their collective statements. Such orthodoxies and doctrines may be functional to the extent that they provide practitioners with a sense of conviction and the confidence necessary for action. Such conviction, however, may be accompanied by rejection of alternative methods and of some of the facts which may be available. A code of ethics could serve to remind practitioners

to eschew orthodoxies, to strive to be well informed and open minded and to keep abreast of new ideas and developments.

Role Ambiguity

Research and development activities of recent years have resulted in emphasis on the importance of the developmental and stimulus functions of day care and preschool practitioners as compared with more traditional custodial and guidance functions. In addition, recent policies related to early childhood emphasize parental involvement on all levels of programming, concern for nutrition and health screening, and relevant social services. These pressures and policies add to and aggravate a long-standing problem of role ambiguity for preschool workers. The central source of ambiguity stems from the general proposition that the younger the child served, the wider

the range of his or her functioning for which adults must assume responsibility. Day care and preschool practitioners cannot limit their concerns only to children's academic progress and pupil role socialization. The immaturity of the client presses the practitioner into responding to almost all of the child's needs and behavior. Responsibility for the whole child may lead to uncertainty over role boundaries, for example, in cases of disagreement with parents over methods of discipline, toilet-training, sex role socialization and so on. Clarification of the boundaries of practitioner roles and/or the limits of their expertise could be reflected in a code of ethics.

In summary, four aspects of the role of day care and preschool workers seem to imply the necessity for a code of ethics:

high power and low status, multiplicity of client groups, and ambiguity in the data base and in the role boundaries of practitioners. It seems reasonable to suggest that the actual problems encountered by practitioners in the course of daily practice typically reflect combinations of several of these aspects.

What Are Some Examples of Ethical Problems?

Some examples of situations which seem to call upon preschool practitioners to make ethical choices are outlined below. The examples are discussed in terms of relationship with major client groups such as parents, children, and colleagues and employers.

Ethical Issues Involving Parents

Perhaps the most persistent ethical problems faced by preschool practitioners

are those encountered in their relations with parents. One common source of problems stems from the fact that practitioners generally reflect and cherish so-called middle class values and tend to confuse conventional behavior with normal development. An increase in practitioners' self-consciousness about being middle class (in the last dozen years), seems to have increased their hesitancy to take a stand in controversies with parents.

Within any given group of parents, preferences and values may vary widely according to their parents' membership in particular cultural, ethnic or socio-economic groups. A practitioner may, for example, choose to reinforce children as they develop conventional sex role stereotypes. But one or more parents in the client group may prefer what has come

to be called an "alternative lifestyle." Or a parent may demand of her child's caretaker that she not allow her son to play with dolls, even though the caretaker may prefer not to discourage such play. When practitioners are committed to respect and respond to parental values and input they may be faced with having to choose between what is right and what is right. What data or pedagogical principles can be brought to bear on such choices?

Similar types of parent-staff ethical conflicts arise from discrepancies between parental and practitioner preferences with respect to curriculum goals and methods. For example, practitioners often prefer informal, open or so-called "child-centered" curriculum goals and methods, while parents opt for traditional methods. If parents are the primary clients of the staff, what

posture should the staff take when discrepancies in preferences occur? Specifically, suppose that a child in an informal setting produces a piece of art work that appears to his parents to be nothing more than scribbles. On the other hand, the caregiver respects the work as the child's attempts at self-expression and also values the kinds of fine motor skill development such a product supports. Suppose further that the practitioner knows that the art work might cause a parent to make demeaning remarks to the child, or even scold him. Suppose the same caretaker also knows that if the child brings home work regarded by the parents as evidence that the child is mastering the Three R's that his parents would complement and reward him. How should the caretaker resolve the conflict between

her pedagogical preferences and the demands of the home on the child? What choice would be in the best interests of the child? It is unlikely that such issues can be settled on the basis of available evidence (see Spodek, 1977).

Disagreements between practitioners and parents as to which child behaviors should be permitted, modified or punished are legion. Some of the disagreements are a function of differences between the referent baselines of the two groups. Practitioners tend to assess and evaluate behavior against a baseline derived from experience with hundreds of children in the age group concerned. Thus their concepts of what is the normal or typical range of behavior for the age group are apt to be much wider than parents' concepts. As a result, practitioners' tolerance for children's behavior (such as thumb-sucking,

crying, masturbation, using dirty words, aggression, sexual and sex role experimentation, etc.) is likely to be greater than that of the majority of parents. Parents do not universally accept the wisdom that comes from practitioners' experience, and not infrequently instruct them to prohibit what practitioners themselves accept as normal behavior. How can practitioners respect parental preferences and their own expertise as well?

In the course of their daily work, preschool practitioners often encounter a mother who involves them in her total life problems. For example, a mother may spill out all her personal problems to her child's preschool teacher. In such a case, the practitioner may find herself with unwelcome information. Two kinds of ethical issues emerge from such cases. First, the parent

may be seeking advice on matters that lie outside of the practitioner's training and expertise. As a result the practitioner may want to refer the parent to specialized counseling or treatment. Are there risks in making such referrals? What about the possibility that the unwanted information implies to the practitioner that the child might be in psychological danger, and the mother rejects the recommendation for specialized help? Ethically, what are the limits of the practitioner's responsibility to the whole child? Secondly, such cases are representative of many other occupational situations which require confidentiality and sensitivity in handling information about clients' private lives. A code of ethics should address issues concerning the limits of expertise and the confidentiality of information.

Another example of ethical issues in practitioner-parent relations concerns the risks and limits of truthfulness in sharing information with parents and colleagues. For example, parents often ask caregivers and preschool teachers about their children's behavior. In some cases, a parent wants to check up on his/her child in order to know whether the child is persisting in undesirable behavior. If the practitioner knows that a truthful report will lead to severe punishment of the child, how should she reply? Similarly, in filling out reports on children's progress for use by others, practitioners often worry as to whether a truthful portrayal of a given child will result in prejudicial and damaging treatment by practitioners in the subsequent setting receiving the report. Withholding information is a type of playing God which causes considerable anxiety in

teachers generally. In a similar way, let us suppose that a practitioner had good reason to believe that making a positive report to a parent about a child's behavior (even though the report might be untrue or exaggerated) would improve relations between the child and his parents. Even if the ploy had a high probability of working, would it be ethically defensible?

In summary, day care and preschool practitioners face constant ethical dilemas in their relations with parents. Contemporary emphasis on greater involvement and participation of parents in their children's education and care is likely to increase and intensify these problems. A code of ethics cannot solve the problem encountered by preschool practitioners. But it can provide a basis upon which staff members and their clients

could, together, confront and think through their common and separate responsibilities, concerns and ideas about what they believe to be right.

Ethical Issues Involving Children

One of the sources of ethical conflicts for preschool workers stems from the fact that the young child has not yet been socialized into the role of pupil. A ten-year-old has been socialized to know very well that some things are not discussed with teachers at school. The preschooler does not yet have a sense of the boundaries between home and school, and what one should or should not tell caretakers and teachers. Children often report information about activities that practitioners would rather not have. For instance, children sometimes report on illegal or private activities going on at home. For one thing,

the reliability of the report is difficult to assess. For another, asking leading follow-up questions may encourage a child to tell too much . What should a practitioner do with such information? Practitioners sometimes find themselves at a loss for words in such situations (Rosenberg and Ehrgott, 1977).

Another type of problem related to program activities seems to have ethical implications. Children's enjoyment of certain activities should of course be considered in program planning, but this attribute of an activity is not sufficient in and of itself to justify its inclusion in a program. For example, children like to watch television but are not adequate judges of what programs are worthwhile. This type of problem involves complex pedagogical, psychological and ethical

issues (see Peters, 1966). Sometimes such problems are confounded by caregivers' tendencies to be motivated by a strong wish to be loved, accepted or appreciated by the children. Children's affection and respect for caregivers and preschool teachers is one useful indicator of their effectiveness. But such positive child responses should be consequences of right action rather than motives underlying practitioners' choices and decisions.

Preschool practitioners are increasingly under pressure to teach their children academic skills. On the whole, practitioners appear to resist such pressures, not only on the basis of the possible prematurity of such skill learning, but also as part of a general rejection of so-called "structured" or traditional schooling. Occasionally,

however, the pressure may be so great as to tempt practitioners into giving their charges crash courses on test items, thereby minimizing the likelihood of a poor showing on standardized tests. Even if practitioners can get away with such tactics, should they be ethically constrained against doing so? Should a code of ethics address questions of what stand to take on the uses and potential abuses of tests for assessing achievement, for screening and for labeling children?

Ethical Issues Involving Colleagues and Employing Agencies

One of the most common sources of conflict between co-workers in preschool settings centers around divergent views on how to treat children. Staff meetings conducted by supervisors, or supervisory

intervention and assistance on a one-to-one basis, seem to be the appropriate strategies for resolving such conflicts. But when a parent complains to one teacher about another, how should the recipient of the complaint respond? Such cases often offer a real temptation to side with the complainant. But would that response be right? Perhaps one guideline which may be relevant to such inter-staff conflicts would be for the individual practitioners involved to ask themselves (and other appropriate resource people) whether the objectionable practice is really harmful to children. If the answer, after serious reflection, is clearly "Yes," then action by the appropriate authority must be taken to stop the harmful practice. But the state-of-the-art of day care and preschool education does not yet lend itself to definitive answers to

all questions of clear and present danger to children. If the practices in question are objectionable merely on the grounds of taste, ideological persuasion or orthodoxy, then practitioners should resist the temptation to indulge in feuds among themselves and alliances with parents against each other.

Examples of ethical dilemmas facing practitioners in their relations with employers include those in which practitioners are aware of violations of state or local regulations, misrepresentations of operating procedures in reports to licensing authorities, or instances of an owner's misrepresentation of the nature of the program and services offered to clients. To what extent should practitioners contribute, even passively, to such violations? Most day care and preschool personnel work without

contracts, and thus risk losing their jobs if they give evidence or information which might threaten the operating license of their employing agency. Should employees be silent bystanders in these kinds of situations? Silence would be practical, but would it be ethical?

Another type of dilemma confronts practitioners when agencies providing day care services require declarations of income from parents in order to determine their fees. One such case concerned a welfare mother who finally obtained a job and realized that the day care fees corresponding to her income would cause her actual income to amount to only a few more dollars than she had been receiving on welfare. Yet she really wanted to work. Her child's care-giver advised her not to tell the agency that she was employed, and to wait for the

authorities to bring up the matter first. It is easy to see that the practitioner in this situation was an active agent in violating agency and state regulations. But she also knew that alternative arrangements for child care were unavailable to this mother, and that the child had just begun to feel at home and to thrive in the day care center. The practitioner judged the whole family's best interests to be undermined by the income-fee regulations. How could a code of ethics address such an issue?

What Next Steps Might be Taken?

Some preliminary steps toward developing a code of ethics have already been taken. The Minnesota Association for the Education of Young Children (MnAEYC) adopted a Code of Ethical Conduct Responsibilities in 1976. The code enumerates a total of

thirty-four principles divided into three categories: (1) General Principles for All Members, (2) Additional Principles for Members Who Serve Children in a Specific Capacity, and (3) Members Who Serve through Ancillary Services such as Training, Licensing, etc. The category contains nineteen principles and is further delineated into four subcategories for members who are trainers, those who are licensing personnel, for members who are parents and for those who are supervisors and administrators.

Many of the principles listed in the MnAEYC Code correspond to suggestions made in this paper. A number of the principles, however, might be more applicable to job descriptions than to a code of ethics (e.g., Principle 29 for Supervisors states, "...should provide

regular in-service training to further staff development and to meet licensing requirements when appropriate"). Three of the Principles are addressed to members who are parents. Since parents are clients rather than practitioners the appropriateness of including them in a practitioners' code of ethics is doubtful.

An initial code of ethics for early childhood education and development professionals has also been proposed by Ward (1977). Ward proposes nineteen statements of commitments under three headings: (1) For the Child, (2) For the Parents and Family Members and (3) For Myself and the Early Childhood Profession. These statements cover a wide range of aspects of working with young children, and together with the code adopted by MnAEYC could provide a useful basis for

further discussion.

It seems advisable to begin at a local level to refine these codes or develop another code. Small groups of workers at a given day care or child development center or locale might constitute themselves into an ethics committee and thrash through issues to determine where they stand. Local efforts and problems could be shared with ethics committees of statewide associations.

The process of developing and refining a code of ethics will undoubtedly be slow and arduous. Many practitioners are cynical about the value of such codes. But, as Levine (1972) points out, the work of developing a code involves self-scrutiny, which in and of itself may strengthen resistance to the many temptations encountered in practice. Furthermore, recent research on helping behavior

suggests that individuals' responses to their own conflicting impulses are strongly influenced by their perceptions of the norms of the group with whom they identify (cf. Wilson, 1976). The norms of our colleague group, articulated in a code of ethics, may help to give us the feeling that colleagues will back us if we take a risky (but courageous) stand, or censure us if we fail to live up to the code. The daily work of day care and preschool practitioners is fraught with ambiguities. A code of ethics may help practitioners to cope with the ambiguities with greater success.

References

Becker, H.S. The nature of a profession. In N. B. Henry, (Ed) Education for the professor. The Sixty-first Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1962.

Beker, J. Editorial: On defining the child care profession - I. Child Care Quarterly, 5(3), Fall 1976. pp. 165-166.

Bersoff, Donald N. Professional ethics and legal responsibilities: On the horns of a dilemma. Journal of School Psychology, 13(4), 1975. pp. 359-376.

Eisenberg, Leon. The ethics of intervention: Acting amidst ambiguity. Journal of Child Psychiatry, 16(2), April, 1975. pp. 93-104.

Katz, Lilian G. Early childhood education and ideological disputes. Educational Forum, 3(39), March, 1975. pp. 267-271

Levine, Maurice. Psychiatry and ethics. George Braziller, New York. 1972.

Minnesota Association for the Education of Young Children. Code of ethical responsibilities, 1976. (MnAEYC, 1821 University Avenue, Room 373, South St. Paul, Minnesota 55104)

Moore, Wilbert E. The professions: Roles and roles. Russell Sage Foundation. New York. 1970.

Peters, R. S. Ethics and education. Scott, Foresman and Company. 1966.

Rosenberg, H. & Ehrgott, R. H. Games teachers play. School Review, 85(3), May 1977. pp. 433-437.

Spodek, Bernard. From the president. Young Children, 32(4), May, 1977. pp. 2-3.

Spodek, Bernard. Curriculum construction in early childhood education. In B. Spodek & H. J. Walberg, (Eds.) Early childhood education. McCutchan Publishing Corp., Berkeley, Calif., 1977.

Ward, Evangeline H. A code of ethics: The hallmark of a profession. In B. Spodek (Ed.) Teaching practices: Reexamining assumptions. 1977. National Association for the Education of Young Children. Washington, D.C.

Wilson, J. P. Motivation, modeling, and altruism: A person x situation analysis. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 34(6), December 1976. pp. 1078-1086.

Postscript

The Educational Resources Information Center/Early Childhood Education Clearinghouse (ERIC/ECE) is one of a system of 16 clearinghouses sponsored by the National Institute of Education to provide information about current research and developments in the field of education. The clearinghouses, each focusing on a specific area of education (such as early childhood, teacher education, languages and linguistics), are located at universities and institutions throughout the United States.

Each clearinghouse staff searches systematically to acquire current, significant documents relevant to education. These research studies, speeches, conference proceedings, curriculum guides, and other publications are abstracted, indexed and published in Resources in Education (RIE), a monthly journal. RIE is available at libraries, or may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Another ERIC publication is Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE), a monthly guide to periodical literature which cites articles in more than 700 journals and magazines in the field of education. Articles are indexed by subject, author, and journal contents. CIJE is available at libraries, or by subscription from Macmillan Information, 909 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

The Early Childhood Education Clearinghouse (ERIC/ECE) distributes a quarterly newsletter which reports on new programs and publications and RIE documents of special interest. For a complete list of ERIC/ECE publications, or if you would like to to subscribe to the Newsletter, write: ERIC Clearinghouse/Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois, 805 West Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, Illinois 61801.

THE ERIC CLEARINGHOUSES

CAREER EDUCATION
Center for Vocational Education
Ohio State University
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210
(614) 486-3655

COUNSELING AND PERSONNEL SERVICES
The University of Michigan
School of Education Building
Room 2108, East Univ. & South Univ.
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109
(313) 764-9492

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
University of Illinois
805 West Pennsylvania Avenue
Urbana, Illinois 61801
(217) 333-1386

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403
(503) 686-5043

HANDICAPPED AND GIFTED CHILDREN
The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, Virginia 22091
(703) 620-3660

HIGHER EDUCATION
George Washington University
1 Dupont Circle, Suite 630
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 296-2597

INFORMATION RESOURCES
School of Education
Syracuse University
Syracuse, New York 13210
(315) 423-3640

JUNIOR COLLEGES
University of California
96 Powell Library Building
Los Angeles, California 90024
(213) 825-3931

LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
Center for Applied Linguistics
1611 North Kent Street
Arlington, Virginia 22209
(703) 528-4312

READING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS
1111 Kenyon Road
Urbana, Illinois 61801
(217) 328-3870

RURAL EDUCATION AND SMALL SCHOOLS
New Mexico State University, Box 3AP
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003
(505) 646-2623

SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, AND
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
Ohio State University
1200 Chambers Road, Third Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43212
(614) 422-6717

SOCIAL STUDIES/SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION
855 Broadway
Boulder, Colorado 80302
(303) 492-8434

(continued)

TEACHER EDUCATION
1 Dupont Circle, N.W., Suite 616
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 293-7280

TESTS, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
Educational Testing Service
Princeton, New Jersey 08540
(609) 921-9000, Ext. 2176

URBAN EDUCATION
Teachers College, Box 40
Columbia University
New York, New York 10027
(212) 678-3438

The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to a contract with the National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their judgement in professional and technical matters. Prior to publication, the manuscript was submitted to the Area Committee for Early Childhood Education at the University of Illinois for critical review and determination of professional competence. This publication has met such standards. Points of view or opinions, however, do not necessarily represent the official view or opinions of either the Area Committee or the National Institute of Education.